

National Johne's Work Group
Sunday November 14, 2010

The meeting was well attended with over 50 members and guests present. The focus of the session was on the current status of the Johne's program, including the impact of budget cuts and industry lead efforts to address the disease.

Ken Olson reported results from a survey of DJC's and industry groups to assess the impact of Johne's education and outreach efforts. Over two thirds of the states reporting indicated that cuts in federal funding had resulted in fewer samples run, fewer Risk Assessments and Management Plans (RAMP's) completed, fewer educational activities and fewer veterinary certification. A positive was that half of the states reported that some state funding was provided for the program. Another positive was industry involvement. DHIA reported a 10% increase in milk ELISA samples run with over 207,000 samples run in the past year. A concern noted was lack of discussion between state program leader and industry relative to the Johne's Strategic Plan and program priorities in the state with limited funding.

Bill Hartmann reported on the Minnesota experience. State funds have been reduced to some extent in addition to substantial cuts in federal program funds. It has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of status herds as many producers are not recognizing adequate return on investment to maintain their status. There is good producer awareness of the disease and a desire by producers to maintain the program, but not a clear direction on how to do it. An area of involvement and cooperation is that MN DHIA is running the milk ELISA samples for the state.

Ken Olson reported on work of the "Marketing Group". They had met via conference call, but struggled with exactly what was to be "marketed" the VBJDC Program, testing, management practices of something else. Results from recent national surveys had shown that incentives played a role, but the primary reason producers joined the program was concern over Johne's in their herd. Veterinarians and farm publications were primary sources of information followed by extension. All have good credibility with veterinarians rated highest. Based on surveys and small focus group input messages focused on their operation with as personal a delivery as possible are preferred. Personal contact, meeting and flyers were best. Hard copy was preferred to electronic delivery. Including Johne's within a broader health/biosecurity program was preferred.

Kathy Finney reported on the NYSCHP program, a broad based program that has evolved out of initial Johne's program efforts. It includes about 900 herds with approximately 35% of the cows in the state. The primary focus for producers in recent years has been on survival. This is impacted by many factors. Herd health is just one item of many and Johne's is one part of the health package. This does impact producer priorities which need to be recognized for the program to be successful. The program uses a structured, team approach to address each herd. A valid vet-client relationship is required as well as animal ID. A herd health status survey, available on the website, is used to develop a herd plan. An annual evaluation is done. Strong producer support has helped to maintain state funding of \$1.5 m.

Producer Group Initiatives

Betsy Flores reported on National Dairy FARM, a QA program coordinated through National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF). It includes three components, education, on-farm evaluation and third-party verification. The first portion is focused on animal care. Plans are to add a Johne's component as part of a biosecurity section. Fifty trainers are in place and 300+ evaluators. Some funding for the initial section came from check-off funds. Additional sections and verification costs are paid by producers or sponsors. Information is available on-line, with much of it in both English and Spanish. Input is welcome. Social media is being used together with DMI.

Elizabeth Parker provided an update on the Beef Quality Assurance program. It originated out of a concern over injection site lesions, but now covers all aspects of production and all segments of the industry. It seeks broad based input and so is consistently being updated. It has a diverse cliental, so needs flexibility. The dairy portion includes biosecurity, which is where Johne's related items are included. Herd security seems better understood by producers, so is used rather than biosecurity. Materials are available on the web.

Todd Byrem reported on DHIA activities. Milk ELISA has been incorporated into the system and is now available in most areas. Use is growing with 300,000 samples expected in North America for 2010. Most data is now stored in the dairy records processing centers (DRPCs), so they are the likely place future information on use. DRPCs are looking to incorporate the data into reports and management packages. Tech training is provided for lab and field personnel, with a new effort underway with JDIP for development of additional materials. Canada DHIA is also providing the test and the two most recent lab additions are state labs. DHIA labs are checked monthly through the Quality Certification Service program that also does other components. There is strong interest in being able to use the monthly QCS evaluation, rather than the annual NVSL evaluation, to meet Johne's program standards.

Cindy Wolf reported on sheep and goat activities. Show animals are the current drivers for sheep prices. The meat goat industry is growing substantially. In producing material for either sheep or goats, it is important to take cattle out of the picture as producers want to focus on their species. We need to assume that veterinarians have limited knowledge of Johne's in either sheep or goats, so provide them with information. Capitalize on the Scrapie program and utilize what was learned there. Utilize livestock markets for information distribution and use producers to tell other producers about it.

Kristin Paul reported on Jersey funding for research. The Jersey Research Foundation has provided a total of about \$850,000 in research funding over several years. Approximately 1/3 of their research funding for 2009-10 will go to two projects looking at genetic markers for Johne's disease. One project is at the University of Wisconsin – Madison and the other at Washington State University. One other item of interest is that Jersey Marketing required a negative Johne's test for all animals over 24 months of age who go into their sales. There is strong producer interest in the disease and information about it.

Charlie Brown reported on activities of ABS Global and other AI organizations relative to Johne's disease. While the risk of spread from semen is seen as low, they seek to minimize any risk and there are international trade requirements to meet. They work with source herds to provide information and

avoid the purchase of animals from herds with no Johne's management program and test all young bulls entering the program at about 10.5 months of age and a second about two months later. Positive animals are isolated eliminated from the program. Resident bulls are tested one or two times annually by fecal culture or PCR and twice by serology.

Robert Hagevoort reported on the New Mexico Dairy Quality Assurance Program. The program was developed in response to producer requests to have available a tool to help them be prepared to address consumer concerns. It includes herd health, animal care and image components. Extension worked with the Dairy Producers of New Mexico and the Livestock Board to develop the program. The program, based initially in the Johne's RA, begins with an on-line assessment and includes all components of the Dairy FARM program and the DFA Gold Standard program, so participants will be able to send the required information to those programs. This will allow them to qualify for those programs as well. It also includes all information required by the TB program so can be used to address the data needs of that program. The on-farm evaluation, that is a part of the program, is being done by one graduate student to assure accuracy and consistency. Evaluations are just beginning. It has strong support from the milk producer association and the milk buyers in the region as well as the state veterinarian.

There was good interest in all of the programs, but no further action was taken by the group.

Notes prepared by Dr. Ken Olson, NJWG Treasurer & JDIP Outreach Coordinator